

MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

10 March 2014*

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:00 PM on Monday, 10 March 2014. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chair; Dr. Dorothy C. Fenwick, Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Mr. Ron Mitchell and Mr. Robert Amdur. Mr. Jacob Laureska was absent and Ms. Alice Marie Gravely has resigned. Representing the County were Mr. Martin Sokolich and Ms. Florence Ball. Mr. Michael Bourne was also in attendance to explain his survey methods. (* The meeting normally scheduled for 3 March was rescheduled due to the closing of Talbot County Government offices due to snow.)

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF THE 3 February 2014 MEETING – The minutes of the last meeting were read. A motion was made to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.
- B. COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS – There was no further discussion of this topic at this time.
- C. HISTORIC PROPERTY SURVEY – Mr. Ward Bucher introduced Mr. Michael Bourne, who is a prominent architect and president of Highfield Inc in Chestertown, Maryland. *Mr. Bourne has done historic property surveys and evaluations of historic structures for many years for the inventory list of the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT), and directed much of the survey work for the properties listed in Where Land and Water Intertwine, a compendium of historic properties in Talbot County, authored by Christopher Weeks, which was assembled under the auspices of MHT in the early 1980's.* Mr. Bourne has been contracted by TCHPC to perform a survey of Talbot County historic properties which were not included in that publication.

The commissioners asked Mr. Bourne to describe the general scope of the survey methods he used for his contributions to Where land and Water Intertwine. Mr. Bourne said he had a great deal of assistance from Cynthia Ludlow and Polly Shannahan. The scope of the survey at that time mainly covered pre-Civil War structures, and a few notable structures that were of later vintage, and that the survey was primarily a “windshield survey” of houses that could be seen from the road. Black and white photographs and color slides were taken. He asked what communities are not presently in an historic district. Wye Mills and Tunis Mills were mentioned. Mr. Ward Bucher said the Commission wants to target the “missing links,” which are notable historic structures that did not get included in the earlier compendium. That would provide a good working list for potential Historic District Overlays. Mr. Bourne said there are approximately twenty communities to potentially survey, and named several of them. Mr. Bourne suggested narrowing the field to specific categories. Dr. Dorothy Fenwick suggested several categories such as churches, stores, cemeteries, barns, schools and villages which might be appropriate survey classifications. It was discussed that the

survey project must rationalize for the public money being spent. A comment was made that there seems to be few people with a burning desire to catalog historic sites and preserve them. Mr. Ward Bucher suggested that there may be more funding available for surveying historic properties in African American communities. Mr. Martin Sokolich commented that outreach such as public meetings may be needed to foster interest. Another suggestion was made that colleges and universities that provide architectural studies requiring internships may be a source of funding if interns were enlisted to do some of the survey work under Mr. Bourne's direction.

Asked by Mr. Ward Bucher when TCHPC would need to get information to the County Council, Mr. Sokolich replied, "the budget hearings began today and will continue until the beginning of April." Mr. Bucher asked Mr. Bourne to get his ideas together to present to the County Council. Mr. Bourne replied that he will contact MHT to get an idea of what they charge for survey work, and base the fee for his survey services on that. He said he wants to visit the potential target areas previously mentioned and count as many buildings as he can find to start a list. Dr. Dorothy Fenwick asked Mr. Bourne what he feels would be feasible for approximately \$10,000 - \$15,000 matching funds for a specific survey category. He replied that he cannot determine that until he has had a chance to take a preliminary look at some of the areas on his list. He suggested that an inventory of churches might be a good way to start because of the "word of mouth" factor and availability of people to help by providing information about the site and its community.

- D. OXFORD DISTRICT CUSTOM HOUSE (T-549) SITE VISIT REPORT – No discussion at this time. Mr. Ward Bucher will forward the report to Ms. Florence Ball and Mr. Martin Sokolich to send to the property owner.
- E. ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL (T-49) AT THE ANCHORAGE (T-52) – To date, no further news regarding the environmentally endangered chapel was available for discussion. Mr. Ward Bucher said he has not yet had a chance to speak with the owner. He will get in touch with him shortly.
- F. TCHPC VISIT TO THE TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC SOCIETY ARCHIVES – Mr. Ron Mitchell said he spoke to Bob Shannahan, who said he is embarrassed to have visitors to the archives at this time because it needs to be reorganized. It was discussed that perhaps it would be more feasible for TCHPC to arrange a visit next year.
- G. WRIGHTS MILL HOUSE (T-126) – Mr. Martin Sokolich reported that to date he has not received a response from the owners since their initial inquiry.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. JENA (T-163) REPLACEMENT OF DETERIORATED CLAPBOARD SIDING – Mr. Ward Bucher said TCHPC will be visiting Jena to evaluate the condition of the siding and verify the specifications of the existing materials. Mr. Martin Sokolich said he wrote to the owner to find out if he plans to attend the hearing or have the contractor or a caretaker attend in his place. Dr. Dorothy Fenwick suggested that the owner could be asked to send a sample of the replacement siding he proposes to use.

- B. RESIGNATION OF TCHPC COMMISSIONER: NEW OPENING – Ms. Alice Marie Gravely has resigned from TCHPC. There is no word yet from the County Council regarding a replacement.
- C. UPCOMING SITE VISITS – Mr. Robert Amdur said he has arranged a site visit to Fairview (T-60) for Monday, 17 March 2014. Mr. Ward Bucher asked him to cancel the visit to Fairview since the Commissioners need to visit Jena (T-163) instead, to prepare for the review of the replacement siding proposed by the owner. Mr. Amdur said he will contact the owner at Fairview and perhaps arrange a site visit there for April. Mr. Martin Sokolich will email the owner of Jena and ask if his caretaker or other representative can be present for the site visit. Those attending are to meet at the Easton Acme parking lot at 2:45 pm.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be on Monday, 7 APRIL 2014, at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One of the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:15 pm.

14 March 2014